

C08: Introduction to Good and Bad Shape

Place in course: This will normally be part of the third module C. It is suggested that this is taught only when playing bad shapes such as empty triangles seems to have become a significant issue in holding back the player's strength

Pre-requisites: All the rules, and the ability to solve basic puzzles in capturing stones and life & death

Out of scope: No attempt to give a catalogue of many different good and bad shapes is included here. This lesson is only intended to give a feel that some shapes (particularly an empty triangle) are usually bad/inefficient, and that there are some shapes like eye stealing/protecting tesujis which are often useful

Description Description of the empty triangle, and reasons why it is bad: overconcentrated, not many liberties, usually worse than alternative ways of placing the third stone. Examples of the eye stealing/protecting moves. Some examples of other shapes such as bamboo joint, cutting through the knight's move, hane at the end of two stones (good) and dangos (bad)

Learning objective: Pupils will understand the idea that empty triangles are usually bad and will start to get a feel for other shapes being usually good or bad

Main course material/suggested activities

- The main lesson diagrams show some examples of good and bad shapes
- The puzzles page has some puzzles that can be used to check understanding
- It's good to play some games where pupils are deliberately thinking about empty triangles; or to review games and have pupils spot all the empty triangles and suggest alternative moves that could have been played instead

The video in the resources section shows some real examples of empty triangles from a game between two double figure kyu players so watching it can be useful

External Resources and Reinforcement

It's good to use the pupils' games to guide when to reinforce or reintroduce this topic. Most of the time there will be some more important topic to address. But some young players will go through phases where they make a lot of bad shapes. Useful resources on shape include:

- Making Good Shape (volume 3 of the Kiseido basics series)
- "Good Shape and Bad" chapter of Kageyama's Lessons in the Fundamentals of Go
- Shape Up book by Charles Matthews and Seong June Kim https://cdn.online-go.com/shape_up_v1.2.pdf - especially the first two chapters
- Empty Triangles youtube video about 12 minutes <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oXTKewQwfTs>

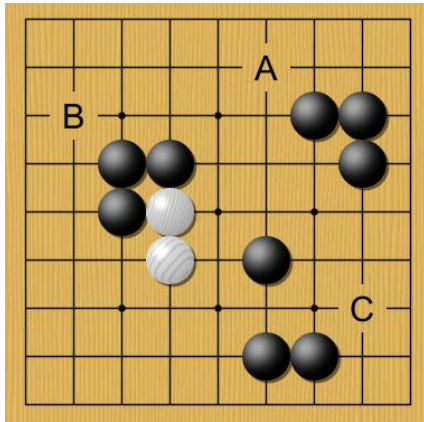


Introduction to Shape

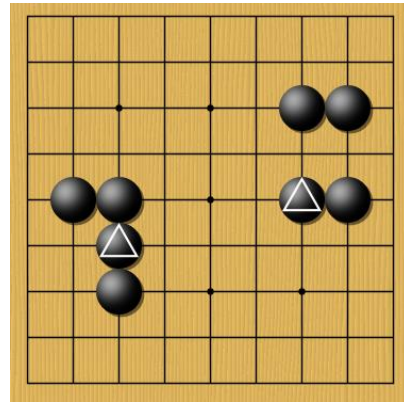
Diagrams to support main lesson content



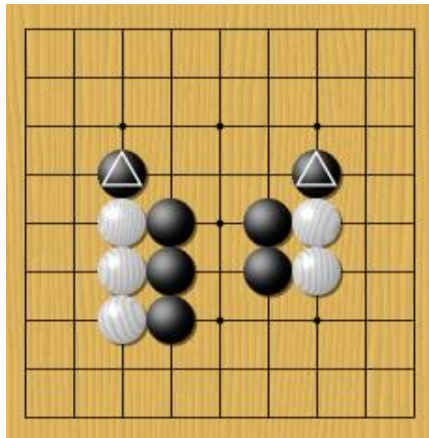
What are good and bad shapes?



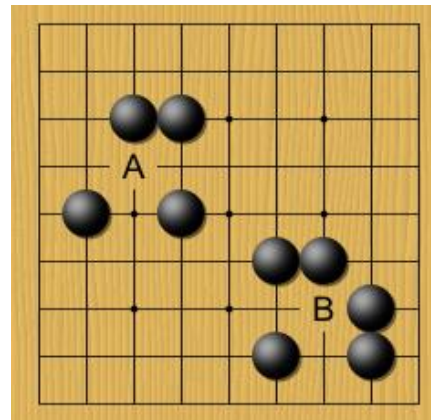
Empty triangle A is usually bad, C is better. B is not an empty triangle.



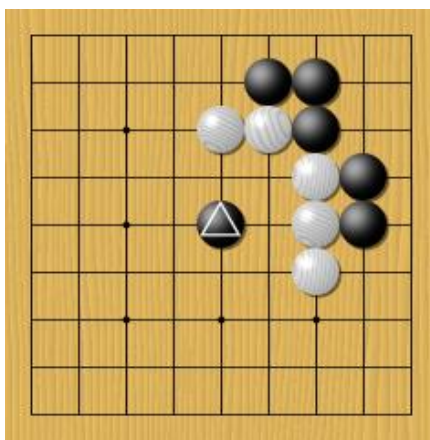
It's usually better to connect using the bamboo joint than to make an empty triangle



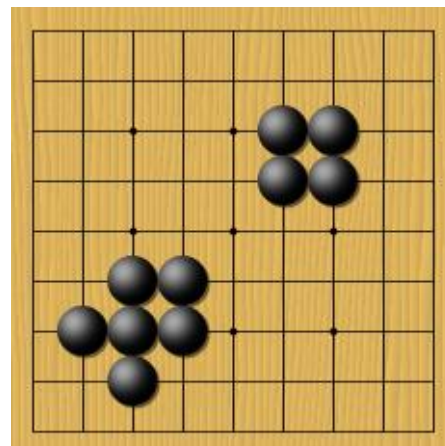
The hane at the end of 2 or 3 stones is usually a good shape



The table (A) and double table (B) are strong shapes



The marked move destroys white's eye shape

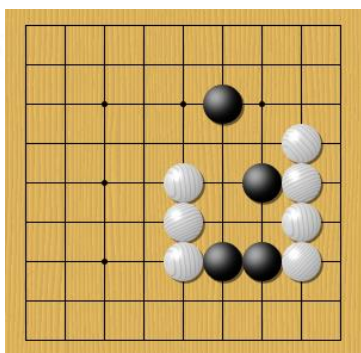


These are dango or dumpling shapes, which are very inefficient.

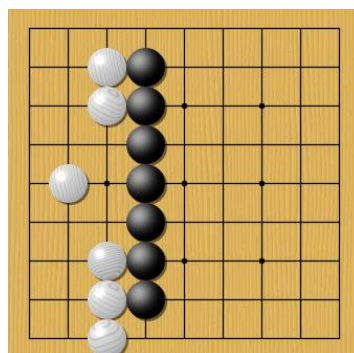


GOOD & BAD SHAPE

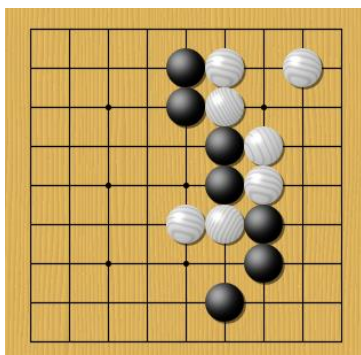
Puzzle sheet



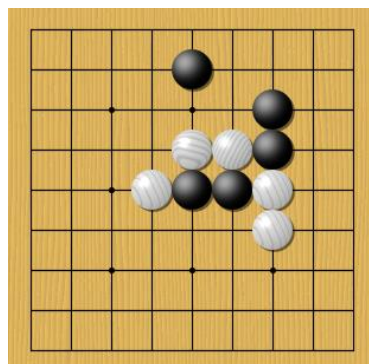
Black to connect using a good shape



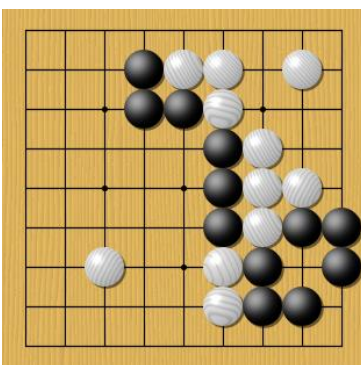
Black to cut white's group in two



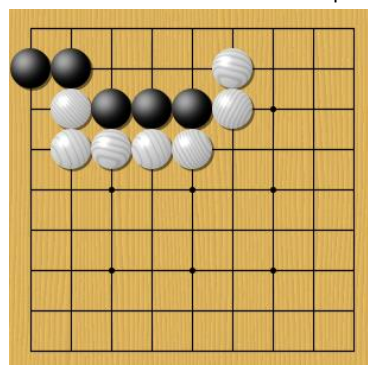
Black to protect the cutting point using a good shape



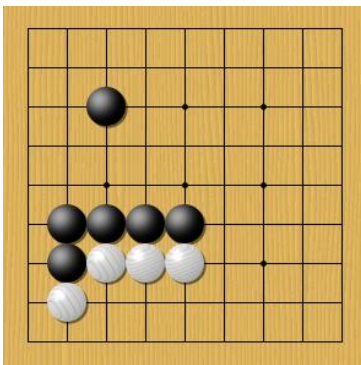
How can Black's two stones escape?



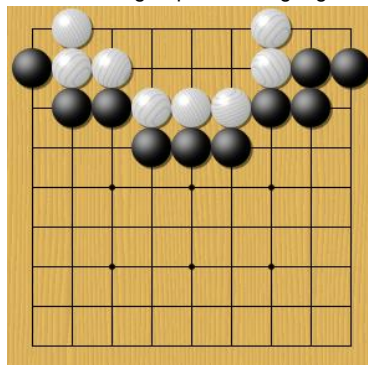
Black to protect the cutting point using a good shape



Black to make the group safe using a good shape



Black to shut white in using a good shape



Black to kill white using a good shape move